Celilo Falls, Oregon on the Columbia River c. 1957

Reflections

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This appears to be another photograph from the same visit to Celilo Falls shown in the previous image, although I am still sorting through the material and cannot yet say that with certainty. The collection includes a mixture of prints and negatives that became separated over time, and it may represent three or four different rolls of film—perhaps all taken during one visit, although there may have been more than one.

Some of the prints still carry the old Kodak roll numbers stamped on the back, which may help me reconnect them with the proper negatives. Quite a few negatives remain in their original sleeves inside the small yellow Kodak booklets, while others have become mixed among different groups of family photographs. Altogether, there may be thirty or more photographs of Celilo Falls in the family archive.

Assuming this image was taken by my grandfather, Thurman Dear, it shows the full frame of the negative. Many of the surviving prints were cropped, sometimes quite heavily, so it is fascinating to see how much more the camera originally recorded.

What strikes me most is the number of people gathered around the falls. Some are clearly fishing, while others appear simply to be standing and watching. I cannot help wondering how many had come to see Celilo one last time before it disappeared beneath the waters of The Dalles Dam.

I will share these photographs carefully as I work through them. Some probably should not be shared publicly.

Once everything has been scanned and properly organized, I would like to place the original photographs and negatives with an appropriate museum, archive, or tribal repository connected to Celilo Falls and to the Native nations whose histories are inseparable from this place. I would be grateful for suggestions about where this collection might be most respectfully and permanently preserved.